

Message Text

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53

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SAM-01 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

AID-05 OMB-01 /071 W

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R 131150Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6152

O

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

COMIDEASTFOR

RUSNAAAATUSCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 2238

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: OTRA, PINT, YE

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT HAMDI TRAVEL PLANS

1. SUMMARY. YAR PRESIDENT IBRAHIM AL-HAMDI PLANS VISIT JORDAY, SYRIA AND BAGHDAD BEFORE END OF MONTH. THRUST OF VISIT IS NOT SO MUCH AID, AS ENHANCED IMAGE IN ARAB WORLD.

2. HAMDI HAS FOR SOME TIME BEEN ANXIOUS TO SO SOME TRAVELING. HIS PREVIOUS PRESIDENTIAL EXPOSURE TO THE ARAB DIPLOMATIC CIRCUIT
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IS LIMITED TO TRIPS TO ARAB SUMMIT AT DAR AL BEYDA AND TO RIYADH

AT TIME OF FEISAL'S DEATH

3. TRIPS WHICH NOW PLANNED--FINAL DATES HAVE NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED BUT HE WILL LEAVE WITHIN NEXT WEEK--ARE PROBABLY SEEN AS WAY TO WIN HIM RECOGNITION NOT JUST AS ANOTHER OFFICER WHO HAS GRABBED POWER BUT AS POLITICIAN WHO HAS CONSOLIDATE HIS POSITION HERE AND SET IN TRAIN LONG-TERM PROGRAMS OF DEVELOPMENT AND POLITICAL COOPERATION WHICH WILL BENEFIT BOTH YEMEN AND PENINSULA.

4. BEYOND BURNISHING HIS IMAGE, HAMDI DOUBTLESS WANTS TO SHOW ERSTWHILE BAATHI ENEMIES IN YEMEN THAT HE HAS BLESSING OF BAGHDAD AND DAMASCUS. THIS IS GESTURE TO LEFT TO OFFSET HOSTILE REACTION TO HIS ENGAGEMENT WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND USG. TRIP ASSERTS HIS INDEPENDENCE.

5. FINALLY HE NOT WILLING TO CONCEDE ANY ADVANTAGE TO SOUTH YEMEN. HE SEES HIS COUNTRY LOCKED IN COMPETITION WITH SOUTH FOR LOYALTY OF YEMENI PEOPLE. HE WANTS TO ASSERT YAR INFLUENCE AMONG YEMENI EMIGRANTS, UNDECIDED ELEMENTS OF HIS OWN AND PDRY POPULATION, AND ARAB STATES WHICH GIVE AID. THIS IS ALSO MATTER OF SIMPLE NATIONALISM, BUT RIVALRY WITH THE SOUTH IS GOAD TO ACTION FOR PROUD, INTELLIGENT HAMDI. HE DOES NOT WANT SOUTH TO FEEL THEY HAVE CLEAR OR EXCLUSIVE TITLE TO AFFECTIONS OF SO-CALLED PROGRESSIVE ARABS IN SYRIA AND IRAQ.

6. IN JORDAY HE WILL DOUBTLESS HAVE DETAILS OF MILITARY AID TO DISCUSS. JORDANIAN PROGRAM HERE IS VERY SUCCESSFUL AND OFFERS SEVERAL POSSIBILITIES OF EXPANSION.

7. IN SYRIA THERE SHOULD BE FEW SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS. SYRIA HAS SMALL AID PROGRAM HERE, BUT MIGHT BE IN POSITION TO PROVIDE MORE TEACHERS, AGRICULTURAL SPECIALISTS. HAMDI WILL WANT TO PAY TRIBUTE TO SYRIA AS "FRONTLINE STATE" AND ASSOCIATE HIMSELF IN DECLARATORY WAY WITH "ARAB STRUGGLE".

8. IN IRAQ HAMDI WILL WANT TO GAIN ASSURANCES THAT COUP ATTEMPT BY LOCAL BAATHI GROUPS AND IRAQI EMBASSY IS AS MUCH A PART OF PAST AS IRAQI IRANIAN CONFRONTATION. HE MAY ALSO WANT TO DISCUSS A YAR ROLE IN ANY GULF SECURITY CONFIDENTIAL

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ARRANGEMENTS AND PERHAPS COORDINATE YEMEN AND IRAQI POSITIONS ON FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION. HOWEVER, IN THESE MATTERS HE WILL KEEP A WEATHER EYE ON SAUDI AND IRANIAN VIEWS.

9. COMMENT: HAMDI TRIP IS NOT AROUSING GREAT EXPECTATIONS OR COMMENT HERE. HAMDALLAH ASNAG, FOR INSTANCE, DISCUSSES IT IN PERFUNCTORY TERMS, EVEN THOUGH HE IS A STRONG LOYALIST OF HAMDI AND PERHAPS HIS CLOSEST MENTOR. NEVERTHELESS,

HAMDI ACCEPTANCE, BOTH IN YEMEN AND ABROAD, IS GROWING
APACE, AND THE TRIP IS ANOTHER INDICATION OF THE
STRENGTH, AMBITION, SHREWD POLITICAL SENSE OF THIS QUIET
AND CALCULATING YOUNG MAN.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 AUG 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SANA02238
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750279-0976
From: SANA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750856/aaaabxde.tel
Line Count: 120
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENT HAMD I TRAVEL PLANS
TAGS: OTRA, PINT, YE, (HAMD I, IBRAHIM MUHAMMAD AL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006